Veterans Affairs Canada | Anciens Combattants Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada

2017–18

Departmental Plan

The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs and
Associate Minister of National Defence

Canada

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Minister's Message

Our 2017–18 Departmental Plan provides parliamentarians and Canadians with information on what we do and the results we are trying to achieve during the upcoming year. To improve reporting to Canadians, we are introducing a new, simplified report to replace the Report on Plans and Priorities.

The title of the report has been changed to reflect its purpose: to communicate our annual performance goals and the financial and human resources forecast to deliver those results. The report has also been restructured to tell a clearer, more straightforward and balanced story of the actual results we are trying to achieve, while continuing to provide transparency on how tax payers' dollars will be spent. We describe our programs and services for Canadians, our priorities for 2017–18, and how our work will fulfill our departmental mandate commitments and the government's priorities.

Our course for the coming year will be driven by three basic principles—care, compassion, and respect. We will care for the men and women who have served Canada and their families. We will show compassion for their needs, and work hard to meet them. We will respect them and recognize their extraordinary service and sacrifices. Our plans to honour and commemorate Canadian Veterans and those who died in service include marking the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and opening the new Vimy Visitor Education Centre, in France, as well as building a national memorial to Canada's mission in Afghanistan, in Ottawa.

Our overall focus for 2017–18 is to always put the well-being of Veterans at the centre of everything we do. By making service excellence a priority, we will ensure that Veterans experience improved quality, timeliness and efficiency in the delivery of their services. We will increase the maximum of the Disability Award/Death Benefit and continue our longstanding and important work on mental health. We will strive to be proactive and to respond quickly and compassionately to the emerging needs of Veterans. We will open more offices to better serve Veterans in their communities, expand our online services and continue to hire more frontline staff.

We will work internally to implement our Workplace of Choice Action Plan —a call for cultural change and employee engagement—that lays out the Department's plan to change its work culture and help employees feel supported, informed and actively engaged.

We will use performance measurement and gather feedback directly from Veterans to ensure our programs are meeting their needs. We will track our progress and report back to Veterans. We will continue to align our resources to get the real results that Veterans and their families deserve.

I am confident that the improvements we make over the coming year will help ensure that all of Canada's Veterans and their families experience care, compassion and respect in all their dealings with the Department.

Sincerely,

The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence

Plans at a glance

Well-being of Veterans and their Families

Our focus is the well-being of Veterans and their families. The Department wants to provide the best possible benefits and services tailored to the unique needs of those we serve. Our work will be evidence-informed and outcome oriented—gathering feedback directly from Veterans and other stakeholders. A Veteran's well-being is determined by multiple factors including a need for purpose, financial security, housing, health, family and community (social integration), resilience (life skills) and identity.

Highlights for 2017–18:

- Continue to implement the Mental Health Strategy, working towards the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Mental Health
- Finalize the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)/Veterans Affairs Canada Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan
- Increase the Disability Award/Death Benefit

Mandate Letter Commitment:

On April 1, 2017, the maximum Disability Award/Death Benefit will become $360,000, an increase of 44% since inception in 2006.

Placing Veterans at the centre of everything we do—our philosophies, our ideas and our operations—ensures that we are focusing all our efforts toward improving the well-being of Veterans. We strive to be proactive, responding quickly and compassionately to the emerging needs of Veterans.

Service Excellence

The Department strives for exemplary service and is continuously looking for ways to improve Veteran services practices, ensuring that Veterans needs for information and assistance are being met. Making Service Excellence a priority ensures that Veterans and other individuals experience improved quality, timeliness and efficiency in the delivery of services they receive.

Highlights for 2017–18:

- Open more offices to better serve Veterans in their communities
- Expand online services
- Hire more front line staff

Recognition of Service and Sacrifice

Through the Canada Remembers Program, Canadians are encouraged to recognize and honour those who served the country. Through commemorative ceremonies, learning resources to engage youth, funding for community projects, and financial assistance for Veterans' funerals and burials the Department engages Canadians in reflecting on how past conflicts—and the

sacrifices that were made to resolve them—helped to shape the country we know and appreciate today.

Highlights for 2017–18:

- Mark the 100th anniversaries of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the Battle of Passchendaele, as well as the 75th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid.
- Opening of the Visitor Education Centre in Vimy, France.
- Provide funding to ensure the successful construction of a National Memorial to Canada's mission in Afghanistan

Through these and other planned activities, the Department expects that Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved.

Workplace of Choice

The Workplace of Choice Action Plan—a call for cultural change and employee engagement—lays out the Department's plan to change its work culture and help employees feel supported, informed and actively engaged. The plan will help us: create a workplace that fosters employee health; increase employee understanding of Veterans Affairs Canada's vision, mission and priorities, and what they mean to us and to Veterans; show Care, Compassion and Respect in all we do; and Delegate, Trust and Empower employees. Having an engaged and informed workforce will allow us to provide Veterans and their families with the high level of service they deserve.

Highlights for 2017–18:

- Continue efforts to improve workplace mental health with a focus on the areas of: promotion and awareness; and prevention and resilience
- Implement Care, Compassion and Respect @ Work action plan
- Take action to respond to employee feedback raised in two Employee Pulse Surveys, led by the National Employee Council

Good management practices, including seeking clarity, validating or communicating, accountability, collaborating and building strong relationships in our Workplace of Choice, must be evident in all we do. This includes delegation and empowerment so that employees feel supported, informed and actively engaged. Living up to these principles is essential to building and maintaining an engaged team that is committed to Service Excellence for Veterans. A team committed to Care, Compassion and Respect.

For more information on the Department of Veterans Affairs plans, priorities and the planned results, see the Planned results section of this report.

Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do

Raison d'être

Canada's development as an independent country with a unique identity stems partly from its achievements in times of war. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) exists to assist and help those whose courageous efforts gave us this legacy and contributed to our growth as a nation.

VAC's mandate is set out in the Department of Veterans Affairs Act.[i] It charges the Minister of Veterans Affairs with responsibility for "the care, treatment, or re-establishment in civil life of any person who served in the Canadian Armed Forces or Merchant Navy or in the naval, army, air forces or merchant navies of Her Majesty, of any person who has otherwise engaged in pursuits relating to war, and of any other person designated . . . and the care of the dependants or survivors of any person referred to." Veterans Affairs Canada is also responsible for keeping alive the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict, and peace.

Mandate and role

For more general information about the department, see the Supplementary information section of this report. For more information on the department's organizational mandate letter commitments, see the Minister's mandate letter on the Prime Minister of Canada's website.[ii]

Operating context: conditions affecting our work

Veterans Affairs Canada's work is influenced by many internal and external factors. The programs and services we deliver are impacted by broader policies and priorities of the Government of Canada and must adapt to the needs of the people we serve. At the same time, the management and direction of the programs and services relies on people, budgets, processes and tools. All these factors form our operating context and play an essential role in determining the Department's plans and objectives.

We operate in an ever changing environment as the needs of Canada's Veterans and their families evolve. The Government has increased support for Veterans and their families through significant and substantial commitments to Veterans' programs and services which is welcomed. At the same time this challenges our capacity, and careful planning, sequencing and pacing is required.

The ever steady rise of electronic communications, online networking and social media has also created an environment in which individuals expect to receive responses in real-time. The rise of digital technology has led to pressure for greater transparency, more responsive government and increased public engagement. The Department has been working diligently to ensure that we continue to expand the online availability of information, forms, and applications through avenues such as My VAC Account.

Veterans' issues receive a high level of media coverage throughout the year while engaged Veterans' organizations continue to advocate for improvements to benefits and services for Veterans, especially for improved financial benefits. These organizations are also concerned with issues including homeless Veterans, the mental health of CAF members and Veterans and improved support for the most seriously ill and injured.

The Department must also ensure that business is conducted in a way that respects the current priorities of the Government of Canada. Government-wide there has been a movement toward increased monitoring and reporting on meaningful performance measures and results through the implementation of the new Policy on Results. As a second-wave adopter of the new policy, we are working to adapt to this new approach and be ready for implementation in the fall of 2017.

All of these factors present not only challenges, but opportunities for the Department to examine programs, services, policies and processes to ensure the provision of the best possible service to Canada's Veterans and members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in a timely manner. The Department will be open and accountable to Canadians who want to ensure that we are taking care of those who have given so much in the defence of our country and our freedom.

Key risks: things that could affect our ability to achieve our plans and results

Key Risks

Integrated risk management is a key component of modern management. It ensures that risks are understood, managed, communicated, and integrated into decision making and priority setting. Effective risk management enables decision makers to address challenges and uncertainties proactively.

The table below outlines the Department's response to the top three risks and the steps taken to mitigate them.

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to the Department's Programs	Link to mandate letter commitments or to government wide and departmental priorities
Any delays in achieving the required staffing levels may delay implementation of some Departmental commitments.	Veterans Affairs Canada will: • help managers hire the right people quickly by improving human resources services; • increase front-line staff, who directly serve Veterans; • implement national training initiatives to further enhance services for Veterans; • ensure employees have easy access to clear, up-to-date tools and information that will enable them to provide excellent service to Veterans.	Program 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1	Departmental Priorities: • Well-being of Veterans and their Families • Service Excellence • Recognition of Service and Sacrifice Mandate Letter: • Deliver a Higher Standard of Service and Care
Despite the broad range of Veterans' programs and services available, some CAF members may not transition successfully from military to civilian life.	Veterans Affairs Canada will: • work with the Department of National Defence (DND) and the CAF to develop one integrated and personalized transition process for all releasing members that is member and Veteran centric and does not include complex processes and eligibility criteria; • collaborate with DND and the CAF and other partners to ensure the seamless delivery of benefits and services; and • use research to provide evidence-based support in program and policy design and development.	Program 1.2, 1.3	Departmental Priorities: • Well-being of Veterans and their Families Mandate Letter: • Improve Career and Vocational Assistance • Access to Financial Support and Advice

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to the Department's Programs	Link to mandate letter commitments or to government wide and departmental priorities
The Department may have difficulty addressing the volume of commitments made to Veterans in a timely manner.	Veterans Affairs Canada will: • assess and prioritize initiatives and introduce them in a deliberate and phased manner; • work with other government departments and ensure early engagement on VAC-led initiatives; and • continue to work with stakeholders to ensure we understand their priorities.	Program 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1	Departmental Priorities: • Service Excellence • Recognition of Service and Sacrifice Mandate Letter: • Deliver a Higher Standard of Service and Care

Planned results: what we want to achieve this year and beyond

Programs

Program 1.1: Disability and Death Compensation

Description: This program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, and other eligible individuals for the effects of service-related disabilities, death, and detention. In the case of the Disability Pension, benefits and allowances are provided in the form of monthly payments; for Disability Awards, Critical Injury and Death Benefits, compensation is provided in the form of a monetary award paid as a lump sum, an annual payment, or a combination of both. This program is delivered through operating funds and grants.

Planning Highlights

In 2017–18, we will continue to implement the remaining mandate letter commitments and Federal Budget decisions. Most notably for the Disability and Death Compensation Program, we will:

- increase the Disability Award and Death Benefit maximum to $360,000, effective April 1, 2017, with a retroactive payment for CAF members, Veterans and survivors who have received a Disability Award or Death Benefit since April 1, 2006.

To further enhance Veterans' well-being through the Disability and Death Compensation Program, we will:

- engage with stakeholders and Veterans to discuss benefits, services and programs to streamline and simplify letters, forms and application processes;
- continue research to better understand how Veterans transition from military to civilian life, and use this research to inform program and policy design;
- leverage the six ministerial advisory groups, created to support the Government's commitment to improve transparency and seek input on issues of importance to Veterans and their families;
- strengthen performance measurement and service standards to focus more on program outcomes/results as noted in an internal review of service standards; and
- expand online services through My VAC Account in adherence to the Policy on Service and to improve the percentage of the Department's e-enablement services.

In support of the Department's efforts toward experimentation and innovation, we will:

- work to streamline disability benefit decisions to provide quicker access to treatment, test simplified medical questionnaires to support faster assessments of disability conditions and expand rapid decision-making models to allow for faster, more equitable and consistent decisions for Veterans.

Planned results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2013–14 Actual result	2014–15 Actual result	2015–16 Actual result
Eligible Veterans receive the correct decision for disability benefits and allowances on first application	% of favourable disability and death compensation decisions that are made without requiring a level of review or appeal	80%	March 31, 2018	70% (Target 65%)	89%	84%

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned Spending	2018–19 Planned Spending	2019–20 Planned Spending
2,853,756,218	2,853,756,218	2,018,239,398	2,007,365,913

For further details on budgetary financial resources related to this program, please refer to the Budget Planning Summary.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
773.2	747.7	752.3

Additional information on full-time equivalents related to this program can be found under Planned human resources.

Program 1.2: Financial Support Program

Description: This program provides income support to eligible Veterans and their survivors, to ensure that recipients have income that is adequate to meeting their basic needs. This program also provides income replacement or support to eligible CAF Veterans, survivors, and orphans for the economic impact that a military career-ending and/or service-connected injury, illness or death can have on a Veteran's ability to earn income or save for retirement. Benefits are provided in the form of lump sum or monthly income replacement or support payments, after military release. This program is delivered through operating funds and grants.

Planning Highlights

In 2017–18, we will continue to implement the remaining mandate letter commitments and Federal Budget decisions. Most notably for the Financial Support Program, we will:

- expand the Permanent Impairment Allowance/Career Impact Allowance program, effective April 1, 2017; and
- open and staff four more offices in the areas of Windsor, Thunder Bay, Prince George, and Surrey by May 2017.

To further enhance Veterans' well-being through the Financial Support Program, we will:

- engage with stakeholders and Veterans to discuss benefits, services, and programs in response to Veterans groups and the Veterans Ombudsman who have noted that the New Veterans Charter needs to be enhanced to meet the needs of modern-day Veterans;
- improve the Permanent Impairment Allowance to better support Veterans with career limiting service-related injuries and re-name it the Career Impact Allowance to reflect the intent of the program;
- continue research to better understand how Veterans transition from military to civilian life, and use this research to inform program and policy design;
- strengthen performance measurement and service standards to focus more on program outcomes/results as noted in an internal review of service; and
- expand online services through My VAC Account in adherence to the Policy on Service and to improve the percentage of the Department's e-enablement services.

In support of the Department's efforts toward experimentation and innovation, we will:

- pilot an employment initiative to test Individual Placement and Support within an Operational Stress Injury clinic. The goal is to assess the success factors and barriers to the implementation of supported employment for Veterans in Canada. The one year pilot will include 10 Veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder who express an interest in working and are eligible for VAC's Rehabilitation Program; and
- develop a mobile application, My VAC App, that Veterans can use to access a sub set of My VAC Account functionality through their phone or tablet. It will provide a convenient, secure and efficient method for Veterans to access My VAC Account services via their mobile device.

Planned results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2013–14 Actual results	2014–15 Actual result	2015–16 Actual result
Eligible Veterans and other program recipients have the financial means to fund food, shelter and other necessities	% of eligible Veterans and program recipients whose family income is above the Low Income Measure (LIM)	90%	March 31, 2018	Regular Force Veterans 93.7% Reserve Class C Veterans 94.9%	94%	94%

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned Spending	2018–19 Planned Spending	2019–20 Planned Spending
572,051,974	572,051,974	501,353,032	515,221,186

For further details on budgetary financial resources related to this program, please refer to the Budget Planning Summary.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
89.1	86.1	86.6

Additional information on full-time equivalents related to this program can be found under Planned human resources.

Program 1.3: Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services

Description: This program is designed to improve or maintain the physical, mental and social well-being of eligible Veterans, Reserve Force personnel, civilians, and their survivors and dependants and other individuals, promote independence, and help them to remain at home and in their own communities by providing a continuum of care. The program provides funding for rehabilitation services, career-transition support, health benefits, family caregiver relief benefits, home care and long-term care. This program is delivered through operating funds, grants, and contributions.

Planning Highlights

To further enhance Veterans' well-being through Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services, we will:

- engage with stakeholders, the CAF and Veterans to:
  - discuss benefits, services, and programs;
  - develop a single career transition and employment strategy to support transitioning CAF personnel and Veterans;
  - improve communication on programs and benefits in response to the concern that understanding how programs work and how to access them is often complex, lengthy and challenging; and
  - develop a strategy for improving support to Veterans' families;
- continue to implement the Mental Health Strategy, working towards the creation of a Centre of Excellence for Mental Health;
- finalize the CAF/VAC Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan;
- continue to work with facility partners and provincial health authorities to facilitate Veterans' preferred admission to community beds in former Veterans hospitals and to improve flexibility under the Veterans Health Care Regulations to address the long term care needs of Veterans and their families;
- assist releasing CAF and RCMP members in successfully transitioning to a Public Service career through the creation of a new Veterans Hiring Unit;
- strengthen performance measurement and service standards to focus more on program outcomes/results as noted in an internal review of service; and
- expand online services through My VAC Account in adherence to the Policy on Service and to improve the percentage of the Department's e-enablement services.

In support of the Department's efforts toward experimentation and innovation, we will:

- continue the study of Equine Assisted Learning to determine the safety and efficacy of equine therapy as part of a Veteran's treatment plan.
- pilot a project on psychiatric service dogs to study the effectiveness of service dogs for Veterans with service-related psychiatric conditions.
- continue to enhance consultation in policy development to ensure policy proposals better meet the needs of Veterans and their families by leveraging the established Virtual Consultation Network which includes representatives from VAC, the RCMP, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman (OVO), the CAF/DND and others.

- establish an office of service excellence to provide expertise and leadership in service design.

Planned results

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Dates to achieve targets	2013–14 Actual results	2014–15 Actual results	2015–16 Actual results
Eligible Veterans are able to remain in their own homes and communities	% of Veterans in receipt of the Veterans Independence Program who remain in their homes	90%	March 31, 2018	95.7%	96%	94%
Payments for health care/ treatment benefits are processed in an efficient manner that reduces financial burden on program recipients	% of payments made directly to providers through use of the Veterans Health Care Card (reducing out of pocket expenses for Veterans)	80%	March 31, 2018	98.4% (Target 70%)	98.5% (Target 70%)	98%

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned Spending	2018–19 Planned Spending	2019–20 Planned Spending
1,141,330,144	1,141,330,144	1,067,159,666	1,039,218,459

For further details on budgetary financial resources related to this program, please refer to the Budget Planning Summary.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
1,194.7	1,155.2	1,162.2

Additional information on full-time equivalents related to this program can be found under Planned human resources.

Program 2.1: Canada Remembers Program

Description: Canadian Veterans and those who died in service have made valuable contributions to the development of Canada. This program ensures that Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and that the memory of their sacrifices and achievements is preserved. Canada Remembers Program activities promote the following outcomes: Canadians are knowledgeable about the efforts of Veterans and those who died in service to Canada; Canadian military milestones and the Veterans who participated in them are publicly recognized; communities and other groups lead remembrance activities; symbols erected to honour Veterans and those who served are maintained in perpetuity on behalf of Canadians; and financial assistance is provided to the estates of eligible Veterans for a dignified funeral and burial. Encouraging pride in shared military history, celebrating the contributions and acknowledging the sacrifices of those who served, and preserving symbols to mark their courage all contribute to the Government of Canada's outcome of a vibrant Canadian culture and heritage. This program is delivered through operating funds, grants, and contributions.

Planning Highlights

Through the Canada Remembers Program, Veterans Affairs Canada will support the Government of Canada in living up to its sacred obligation to honour those who served in Canada's military efforts.

- Veterans Affairs Canada will undertake and encourage initiatives that publically recognize and honour Veterans and those who died in service while engaging Canadians in remembrance as they learn about, and take pride in, Canada's contributions during times of war, conflict and peace.

- The Department will mark the centennial of the Battle of Vimy Ridge (April), the 75th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid (August) and the centennial of the Battle of Passchendaele (November) – both in Canada and overseas. The year 2017 will also see the unveiling of the new Visitor Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France. These various initiatives will provide a unique opportunity to bring Canadians together in honour of those who served so selflessly in the cause of peace and freedom and helped shape the country we know and appreciate today. Veterans Affairs Canada will support government-wide efforts to promote the 150th anniversary of Confederation.

  > This year marks the 100th anniversaries of the Battle of Vimy Ridge which will coincide with the opening of VAC's new Visitor Education Centre in Vimy, France.

- The Department will increase opportunities for Canadians to commemorate the contributions of Canada's military by supporting organizations in various commemorative initiatives. For example, as a funding partner for Invictus Games Toronto 2017, the Department will help provide a forum to increase public awareness and express appreciation as Veterans and still-serving members compete in this international sporting event and receive recognition for their achievements.

- The Department will continue to advance work with Canadian Heritage toward the creation of the National Memorial to Canada's Mission in Afghanistan.

- The Department will continue to use performance results and evaluations to guide policy and program improvements and development in the area of commemoration. Past evaluation recommendations (e.g. integrating funding for new memorials within the existing Commemorative Partnership Program) are being implemented to streamline and improve elements of the program. Furthermore, public opinion research, such as the "Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans Week" survey, will continue to assist the Department in determining the impact and effectiveness of Canada Remembers Program initiatives. Survey findings currently indicate that the program is achieving its desired result. Canadians continue to express positive attitudes towards those who served our country and indicate support for Canada Remembers Program initiatives. Ultimately, as the contributions of those who served our country are recognized and Canadians actively engage in remembrance, Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved.

In support of the Department's efforts toward experimentation and innovation, we will:

- provide roving interpretation and stations rather than guided tours at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France in order to provide interpretative services to a much larger number of visitors during the centennial period; and
- pilot a downloadable application providing visitors to Beaumont-Hamel and Vimy sites a self-guided tour, allowing those who visit after operational hours, or during very busy periods, the ability to tailor their visit and receive important information about the sites.

Planned results

Expected Result	Performance Indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2013–14 Actual result	2014–15 Actual result	2015–16 Actual result
Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved	% of Canadians who feel that VAC's remembrance programming effectively honours Veterans and those who died in service, and preserves the memory of their achievements and sacrifices	70%	March 31, 2018	75%	n/a[1]	73%

[1] The performance indicator was different for 2014–15.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned Spending	2018–19 Planned Spending	2019–20 Planned Spending
45,585,347	45,585,347	41,494,828	41,418,428

For further details on budgetary financial resources related to this program, please refer to the Budget Planning Summary.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
89.7	91.5	92.4

Additional information on full-time equivalents related to this program can be found under Planned human resources.

Program 3.1: Veterans Ombudsman

Description: This program provides an independent and impartial opportunity to review complaints submitted by Veterans and other individuals (war-service Veterans, Veterans and serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces [Regular and Reserve], members and former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, spouses, common-law partners, survivors and primary caregivers, other eligible dependants and family members, other eligible individuals and representatives of the aforementioned groups). It promotes fair and equitable treatment in accessing the services, benefits, and programs from Veterans Affairs Canada. This is accomplished by: providing them with information and referrals to facilitate their access to programs and services; reviewing and addressing complaints arising from the Veterans Bill of Rights and decisions on benefits and services for which there is no right to appeal to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; reviewing systemic issues related to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; and identifying and reviewing emerging and systemic issues related to the provisions of the Department's programs and services and providing information and recommendations to the Minister in relation to those issues. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Planning Highlights

- The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman will continue to streamline its business processes and implement an online Client Satisfaction Survey in order to identify areas for further improvement and will redesign its current case management system to take full advantage of the new technology available in order to modernize operations and increase efficiency.

- Charlottetown Operations – The OVO will intervene early in matters brought to the attention of the OVO, so that any complaints and information requests will be resolved in a timely manner.

- Strategic Review and Analysis - The OVO will work to address emerging and systemic issues related to the Department's portfolio, make recommendations and track the Department's progress against recommendations made.

- Outreach - The OVO will engage with Veterans, families and stakeholders through a variety of channels (including town halls, social media and speaking engagements) in order to identify areas of concern among the Veteran community as well as to engage and educate parliamentarians and other key influencers of the need to take action.

In support of the Department's efforts toward experimentation and innovation, we will:

- work with the Department to develop a shared case management system and implement an Ombudsman Complaint Tracking System.

Planned results

Expected Result	Performance Indicators	Targets	Dates to achieve targets	2013–14 Actual results	2014–15 Actual results	2015–16 Actual results
The needs of Veterans and other individuals are addressed through Veterans Affairs programs and services	% of issues raised by Veterans and other individuals that are being addressed by the OVO	80%	March 31, 2018	95%	79%	78%
	% of recommendations raised by the OVO that are accepted by Veterans Affairs	80%	March 31, 2018	84%	91%	93%

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned Spending	2018–19 Planned Spending	2019–20 Planned Spending
5,234,308	5,234,308	5,234,308	5,234,308

For further details on budgetary financial resources related to this program, please refer to the Budget Planning Summary.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
38.0	38.0	38.0

Additional information on full-time equivalents related to this program can be found under Planned human resources.

Veterans Affairs Canada's Internal Services

Description: Internal Services are those groups of related activities and resources that the federal government considers to be services in support of programs and/or required to meet corporate obligations of an organization. Internal Services refers to the activities and resources of the 10 distinct service categories that support Program delivery in the organization, regardless of the Internal Services delivery model in a department. The 10 service categories are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; and Acquisition Services.

Planning Highlights

In 2017–18, we will focus on supporting the implementation of remaining mandate letter commitments. Fostering a Workplace of Choice will enable delivery on the Minister's mandate letter regarding program enhancements while also advancing the federal government's commitments to having a high-performing public service and supporting the psychological health of its employees. An engaged and informed workforce will allow us to provide Veterans and their families with the high level of service they deserve.

In order to achieve the Department's goal to become a Workplace of Choice, active participation and engagement of both managers and employees is required. This will be achieved by engaging, supporting and empowering employees, improving communication, providing leadership support. In addition, the Department will continue efforts to improve workplace mental health with a focus on the areas of: promotion and awareness; and prevention and resilience. This includes enabling access to activities and workshops, held across field and headquarter offices, that destigmatize mental health in the workplace and create an environment for open and honest dialogue on mental health.

Internal Services also support and contribute to the effective and efficient delivery of the Department's programs and are integral to the quality of the services the Department provides to Veterans, their families and other partners.

Most notably for 2017–18, the Internal Services will undertake the following initiatives:

- Support the implementation of priorities outlined in the mandate letter and Blueprint 2020 initiatives;
- Continue creating a strong and vibrant workforce representative of the Canadian population served while advancing the recruitment of former members of the CAF;
- Align internal services in support of Government of Canada and Shared Services Canada direction;
- Expand intranet presence to optimize the sharing and exchange of information and resources available for all employees, particularly to support front-line staff;
- Continue to adopt and enhance information management and information technology solutions and work in partnership with Shared Services Canada in the modernization of existing operating systems; and

- Enhance VAC's performance measurement model to empower employees with the information that they need to achieve better results for Veterans and their families.

In support of the Department's efforts toward experimentation and innovation, we will:

- implement a cognitive computing initiative through the creation of a virtual assistant to help VAC employees in validating or determining a course of action for complex Veterans situations; and
- leverage the shared case management system, in partnership with the Veterans' Ombudsman, and implement an Ombudsman Complaint Tracking System.

Budgetary Financial Resources (dollars)

2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned Spending	2018–19 Planned Spending	2019–20 Planned Spending
73,441,591	73,441,591	72,308,921	71,051,651

For further details on budgetary financial resources related to internal services, please refer to the Budget Planning Summary.

Human Resources (full-time equivalents)

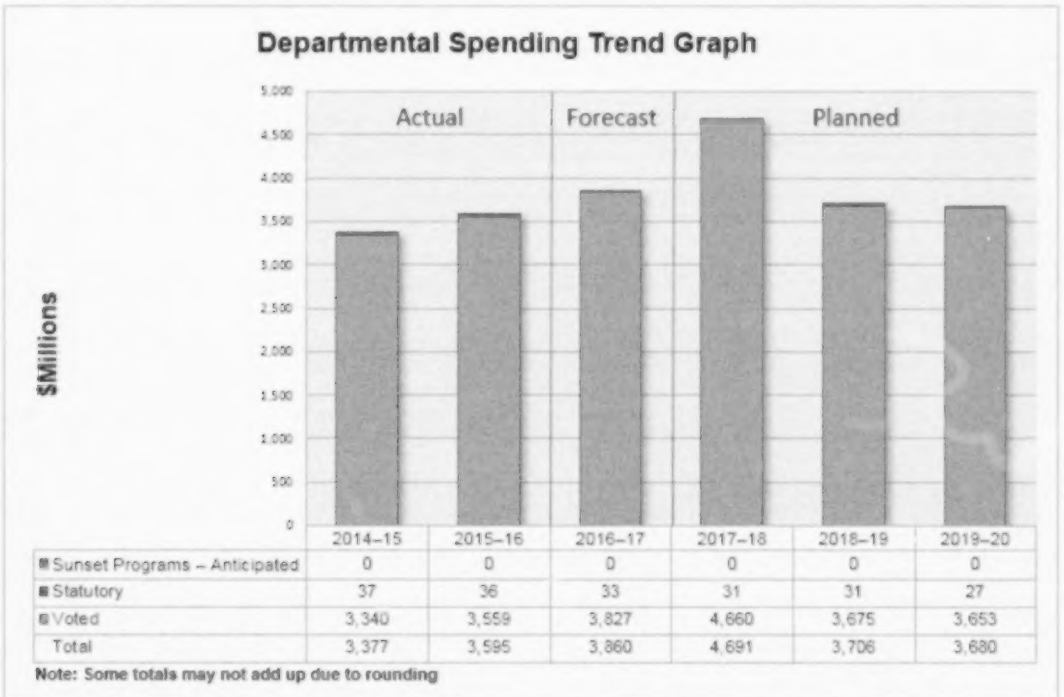
2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
655.9	651.9	652.4

Additional information on full-time equivalents related to internal services can be found under Planned human resources.

Spending and human resources

Planned spending

Departmental Spending Trend



	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20
Sunset Programs – Anticipated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory	37	36	33	31	31	27
Voted	3,340	3,559	3,827	4,660	3,675	3,653
Total	3,377	3,595	3,860	4,691	3,706	3,680

Note: Some totals may not add up due to rounding

The Department's budget fluctuates each year, because of the demand-driven nature of its programs, which are based on Veterans' needs and entitlements. In other words, a Veteran who is entitled to a benefit is paid that benefit, whether 10 Veterans come forward or 10,000.

VAC is forecasting to increase spending by 22% ($832 million) in 2017–18, when compared with forecast spending of $3.9 billion in 2016–17. The majority of this increase is related to the Budget 2016 commitment to restore critical access to services for Veterans, as well as ensure the long-term financial security of disabled Veterans.

While planned spending is currently shown to decrease in the outer years (2018–19 and 2019–20), it is expected the Department will see increased demand for many of its programs and services. Additional funding for this demand will be sought through future Estimates cycles to ensure all eligible Veterans receive the benefits and supports they require, regardless of the number that come forward.

Overall, approximately 90% of the Department's budget represents expected payments to Veterans, their families and other program recipients. The Department continues to see an

increase in the number of CAF Veterans and their families benefiting from VAC programs. At the same time, the number of war-service Veterans is declining, with surviving spouses becoming a larger segment of the population being served.

As a result of this demographic trend of more CAF Veterans and fewer war-service Veterans, forecasts show increased demand for programs such as Disability Awards and Earnings Loss and Supplementary Retirement benefits, and a declining demand for traditional programs and benefits such as Disability Pensions and the War Veterans Allowance.

Budgetary planning summary for Programs and Internal Services (dollars)

Programs and Internal Services	2014–15 Expenditures	2015–16 Expenditures	2016–17 Forecast spending	2017–18 Main Estimates	2017–18 Planned spending	2018–19 Planned spending	2019–20 Planned spending
1.1 Disability and Death Compensation	2,017,365,900	2,143,780,278	2,137,099,013	2,853,756,218	2,853,756,218	2,018,239,398	2,007,365,913
1.2 Financial Support Program	205,167,882	246,513,877	398,617,993	572,051,974	572,051,974	501,353,032	515,221,186
1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services	1,026,146,338	1,070,454,796	1,175,265,397	1,141,330,144	1,141,330,144	1,067,159,666	1,039,218,459
2.1 Canada Remembers Program	45,528,370	50,028,142	56,711,293	45,585,347	45,585,347	41,494,828	41,418,428
3.1 Veterans Ombudsman	4,578,484	4,600,441	4,911,994	5,234,308	5,234,308	5,234,308	5,234,308
Subtotal	3,298,786,974	3,515,377,534	3,772,605,690	4,617,957,991	4,617,957,991	3,633,481,232	3,608,458,294
Internal Services	78,092,980	79,656,670	87,157,158	73,441,591	73,441,591	72,308,921	71,051,651
Total	**3,376,879,954**	**3,595,034,204**	**3,859,762,848**	**4,691,399,582**	**4,691,399,582**	**3,705,790,153**	**3,679,509,945**

Budget Planning Summary

Overall, spending for Disability and Death Compensation, Financial Support Program and Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services will increase in 2017–18 (before a decrease in 2018–19 and 2019–20) related to the Budget 2016 commitments to restore critical access to services for Veterans and ensure the long-term financial security of disabled Veterans. It is also related to increased demand from CAF Veterans and their families.

Budget 2016 commitments included increasing the Disability Award (maximum increased to $360,000 in 2017), and making a retroactive payment to all Veterans who received a Disability Award since April 1, 2006. These retroactive payments are to be made in 2017–18, which is the primary reason why planned spending for Disability and Death Compensation is higher in 2017–18 than the outer years.

Budget 2016 also enhanced support to Veterans by increasing the Earnings Loss Benefit to 90% of a Veteran's pre-release salary and expanding access to the Permanent Impairment Allowance/Career Impact Allowance. These commitments, along with increased demand, are the primary reasons for the increased planned spending in 2017–18 in the Financial Support Program.

Forecast spending for the Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services is higher in 2016–17 than in future years due primarily to one-time costs associated with transferring Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Government of Quebec.

While funding is decreasing in the outer years (2018–19 and 2019–20), demand is expected to increase from Veterans and their families and any new funding requirements will be sought through future Estimates cycles to ensure all eligible Veterans receive the benefits and supports they require, regardless of the number that come forward.

Planned spending in 2017–18 for Commemoration is higher than outer years. This is primarily related to funding for the 2017 commemoration of major milestones of the First World War – Battles of Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele, and the Second World War – Dieppe Raid.

Planned spending within the Veterans Ombudsman program is expected to remain stable over the next three years.

Finally, approximately 2% of total planned spending is being allocated to Internal Services, which will support program delivery and the corporate obligations of the organization.

Planned human resources

Human resources planning summary for Programs and Internal Services (full-time equivalents)[2]

Programs and Internal Services	2014–15 Full-time equivalents	2015–16 Full-time equivalents	2016–17 Forecast full-time equivalents	2017–18 Planned full-time equivalents	2018–19 Planned full-time equivalents	2019–20 Planned full-time equivalents
1.1 Disability and Death Compensation	632.0	645.3	727.0	773.2	747.7	752.3
1.2 Financial Support Program	42.1	49.9	60.0	89.1	86.1	86.6
1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services	1,473.2	1,599.0	984.0	1,194.7	1,155.2	1,162.2
2.1 Canada Remembers Program	90.2	83.7	94.0	89.7	91.5	92.4
3.1 Veterans Ombudsman	33.4	33.8	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0
Subtotal	**2,270.9**	**2,411.7**	**1,903.0**	**2,184.7**	**2,118.5**	**2,131.5**
Internal Services	635.6	597.8	706.0	655.9	651.9	652.4
Total	**2,906.5**	**3,009.4**	**2,609.0**	**2,840.5**	**2,770.4**	**2,783.9**

Planned human resources are increasing significantly as a result of efforts to improve service for Veterans. These resources will support improvements to financial and disability benefits to ensure long-term financial security for disabled Veterans while providing compensation for pain and suffering.

In support of the financial, physical and mental well-being of Veterans, several initiatives were undertaken resulting in increases to VAC's human resource numbers over the last three years. These initiatives include: increased Case Management Services; the creation of three new benefits (Retirement Income Security Benefit, Critical Injury Benefit and Family Caregiver Relief Benefit); increased Financial Benefits for Veterans (including Reservists); investments in mental health; and the re-opening of Veterans Affairs offices across the country.

Planned full-time equivalents for Disability and Death Compensation peak in 2017–18 and, while there is a slight decrease in 2019–20, are higher than previously planned before Budget 2015. These increases are for the commitment in Budget 2016 to increase the Disability Award

[2] Some totals may not add due to rounding.

on a retroactive basis. VAC also increased the number of frontline staff across the country to support the re-opening of area offices.

Budget 2016 also resulted in additional human resources for the Financial Support Program to support an increase to the Earnings Loss Benefit and expanded access to the Permanent Impairment Allowance/Career Impact Allowance.

On April 1, 2016 VAC transferred Ste. Anne's Hospital and the full-time equivalent resources to the Government of Quebec, reducing VAC's human resources by approximately 740 in the Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services. These resources continue to provide quality service to Veterans at Ste. Anne's Hospital under provincial jurisdiction. In 2017–18 through to 2019–20, VAC will increase human resources in this program by approximately 200 full-time equivalents as a result of commitments to improve front line services and to increase and improve benefits to Veterans across the country.

Human resources in the Canada Remembers Program remain fairly consistent with a modest increase in full-time equivalents in 2017–18 to support commemorative events.

No changes are expected over the next three years for the Veterans Ombudsman.

Internal Services is consistent over the next three years, though increased slightly from recent years. This increase is to support the improvements made in service, access and benefits of program delivery to Veterans, as well as the corporate obligations of the organization.

Estimates by vote

For information on Veterans Affairs Canada's organizational appropriations, consult the 2017–18 Main Estimates.[iii]

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations

The Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations provides a general overview of Veterans Affairs Canada's operations. The forecast of financial information on expenses and revenues is prepared on an accrual accounting basis to strengthen accountability and to improve transparency and financial management.

Because the Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations is prepared on an accrual accounting basis, and the forecast and planned spending amounts presented in other sections of the Departmental Plan are prepared on an expenditure basis, amounts may differ.

A more detailed Future-Oriented Statement of Operations and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations to the requested authorities, are available on the Veterans Affairs Canada website.[iv]

Future-Oriented Condensed Statement of Operations
For the Year Ended March 31, 2018 (dollars)

Financial information	2016–17 Forecast results	2017–18 Planned results	Difference (2017–18 Planned results minus 2016–17 Forecast results)
Total expenses	3,824,909,052	4,702,059,747	877,150,695
Total revenues	0	0	0
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	3,824,909,052	4,702,059,747	877,150,695

The estimated net cost of operations for 2017–2018 is $4,702.1 million. Approximately 90% of planned spending for 2017–18 is paid directly to or on behalf of the people VAC serves in the form of compensation and financial support, health care and commemoration.

Supplementary Information

Corporate Information

Organizational Profile

Appropriate Minister: The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P.

Institutional Head: General (retired) Walter Natynczyk, C.M.M., M.S.C., C.D., Deputy Minister

Ministerial Portfolio: Veterans Affairs

Enabling Instruments:

- Department of Veterans Affairs Act[v]
- Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act[vi] (The New Veterans Charter)
- Pension Act[vii]

Year of Incorporation / Commencement: 1923

Reporting framework

Veterans Affairs Canada's Strategic Outcomes and Program Alignment Architecture (PAA) of record for 2017–18 are shown below:

2017-18 PAA- Veterans Affairs Canada					
Strategic Outcome 1 Financial, physical and mental well being of eligible Veterans			**Strategic Outcome 2** Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace.	**Strategic Outcome 3** Veterans rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered by the Veteran Affairs Portfolio.	
Programs					
1.1 Disability and Death Compensation	**1.2 Financial Support Program**	**1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services**	**2.1 Canada Remembers Program**	**3.1 Veterans Ombudsman**	**4.1 Internal Services**
Sub-Programs					
1.1.1 Disability Pension Benefits and Allowances	1.2.1 Earnings Loss Benefit	1.3.1 Health Care Benefits	2.1.1 Public Recognition and Awareness		
1.1.2 Disability Awards, Critical Injury and Death Benefits	1.2.2 Career Impact Allowance	1.3.2 Rehabilitation Services	2.1.2 Commemorative Partnership Program		
	1.2.3 Retirement Benefits	1.3.3 Intermediate and Long Term Care	2.1.3 Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance		
	1.2.4 Canadian Forces Income Support Benefit	1.3.4 Veterans Independence Program	2.1.4 Funeral and Burial Program		
	1.2.5 War Veterans Allowance	1.3.5 Family Caregiver Relief Benefit			

Supporting information on lower-level programs

Supporting information on lower-level programs is available on VAC's website[viii] and in the TBS InfoBase.[ix]

Supplementary Information Tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on Veterans Affairs Canada's website.[x]

- Details on transfer payment programs of $5 million or more;
- Disclosure of transfer payment programs under $5 million;
- Upcoming evaluations over the next five fiscal years; and
- Upcoming internal audits for the coming fiscal year.

Federal tax expenditures

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures each year in the Report on Federal Tax Expenditures.[xi] This report also provides detailed background information on tax expenditures, including descriptions, objectives, historical information and references to related federal spending programs. The tax measures presented in this report are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Organizational Contact Information

Veterans Affairs Canada
161 Grafton Street
P.O. Box 7700
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 8M9

Toll free: **1-866-522-2122**
www.veterans.gc.ca*

Veterans Ombudsman
134 Kent Street
P.O. Box 66
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 7K2

Toll free: **1-877-330-4343**
www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca*

*We are in the process of moving our services and information to Canada.ca. Our current websites will remain available until the move to Canada.ca is complete.

Appendix: Definitions

appropriation (crédit)
Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures (dépenses budgétaires)
Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

Core Responsibility (responsabilité essentielle)
An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a Core Responsibility are reflected in one or more related Departmental Results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan (Plan ministériel)
Provides information on the plans and expected performance of appropriated departments over a three-year period. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament each spring.

Departmental Result (résultat ministériel)
A Departmental Result represents the change or changes that the department seeks to influence. A Departmental Result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

Departmental Result Indicator (indicateur de résultat ministériel)
A factor or variable that provides a valid and reliable means to measure or describe progress on a Departmental Result.

Departmental Results Framework (cadre ministériel des résultats)
Consists of the department's Core Responsibilities, Departmental Results and Departmental Result Indicators.

Departmental Results Report (Rapport sur les résultats ministériels)
Provides information on the actual accomplishments against the plans, priorities and expected results set out in the corresponding Departmental Plan.

full-time equivalent (équivalent temps plein)
A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

government-wide priorities (priorités pangouvernementales)
For the purpose of the 2017–18 Departmental Plan, government-wide priorities refers to those high-level themes outlining the government's agenda in the 2015 Speech from the Throne, namely: Growth for the Middle Class; Open and Transparent Government;A Clean Environment and a Strong Economy; Diversity is Canada's Strength; and Security and Opportunity.

horizontal initiatives (initiative horizontale)
A horizontal initiative is one in which two or more federal organizations, through an approved funding agreement, work toward achieving clearly defined shared outcomes, and which has been designated (e.g. by Cabinet, a central agency, etc.) as a horizontal initiative for managing and reporting purposes.

Management, Resources and Results Structure (Structure de la gestion, des ressources et des résultats)
A comprehensive framework that consists of an organization's inventory of programs, resources, results, performance indicators and governance information. Programs and results are depicted in their hierarchical relationship to each other and to the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute. The Management, Resources and Results Structure is developed from the Program Alignment Architecture.

non-budgetary expenditures (dépenses non budgétaires)
Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance (rendement)
What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

Performance indicator (indicateur de rendement)
A qualitative or quantitative means of measuring an output or outcome, with the intention of gauging the performance of an organization, program, policy or initiative respecting expected results.

Performance reporting (production de rapports sur le rendement)
The process of communicating evidence-based performance information. Performance reporting supports decision making, accountability and transparency.

planned spending (dépenses prévues)
For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts that receive Treasury Board approval by February 1. Therefore, planned spending may include amounts incremental to planned expenditures presented in the Main Estimates.

A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

plans (plan)
The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

Priorities (priorité)
Plans or projects that an organization has chosen to focus and report on during the planning period. Priorities represent the things that are most important or what must be done first to support the achievement of the desired Strategic Outcome(s).

program (programme)
A group of related resource inputs and activities that are managed to meet specific needs and to achieve intended results and that are treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Alignment Architecture (architecture d'alignement des programmes)
A structured inventory of an organization's programs depicting the hierarchical relationship between programs and the Strategic Outcome(s) to which they contribute.

results (résultat)
An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures (dépenses législatives)
Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

Strategic Outcome (résultat stratégique)
A long-term and enduring benefit to Canadians that is linked to the organization's mandate, vision and core functions.

sunset program (programme temporisé)
A time-limited program that does not have an ongoing funding and policy authority. When the program is set to expire, a decision must be made whether to continue the program. In the case of a renewal, the decision specifies the scope, funding level and duration.

target (cible)
A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures (dépenses votées)
Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The Vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

Endnotes

i. Department of Veterans Affairs Act, http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/V-1/index.html
ii. The Minister's mandate letter, http://pm.gc.ca/eng/mandate-letters
iii. 2017–18 Main Estimates, http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hgw-cgf/finances/pgs-pdg/gepme-pdgbpd/index-eng.asp
iv. Future-Oriented Statement of Operations, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/reports/future-oriented-financial-statements
v. Department of Veterans Affairs Act, http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/V-1/index.html
vi. Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Act, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-16.8/
vii. Pension Act, http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/p-6/index.html
viii. Lower-level program information, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/reports/departmental-plan/2017-2018
ix. TBS InfoBase, https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/ems-sgd/edb-bdd/index-eng.html#start
x. Supplementary Information Tables, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/about-us/reports/departmental-plan/2017-2018
xi. Report on Federal Tax Expenditures, http://www.fin.gc.ca/purl/taxexp-eng.asp